AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus [[(10)]] for igniting a gas flare, comprising:

a housing ~~(12, 112)~~ having a body ~~(16, 124)~~ being made from a heat conducting material;

at least one flow passage [[(14)]] of constant cross-section extending through the body ~~(16, 124)~~; and

a heating element embedded in and totally encapsulated by the body ~~means (18) for~~ maintaining the body at a temperature above an ignition temperature of a combustible mixture of combustion air and combustible gases, such that the combustible mixture passing along the at least one flow passage [[(14)]] is ignited immediately upon coming in contact with the body [[(16)]].

2. (Currently amended) The apparatus as defined in Claim 1, wherein the body ~~(16, 124)~~ is made from a ceramic material.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently amended) The apparatus as defined in [[c]]Claim 1, wherein the housing [[(112)]] has an inlet [[(114)]], an outlet [[(116)]], and at least one baffle [[(118)]] positioned within the housing [[(112)]] forms a plurality of interconnected flow passages [[(120)]] which collectively define a flow path [[(122)]] extending from the inlet [[(114)]] to the outlet [[(116)]].

5. (Currently amended) The apparatus as defined in [[c]]Claim 4, wherein at least one fan [[(128)]] is provided to direct the combustible mixture from the inlet [[(114)]] toward the outlet [[(116)]].

6. (New) A gas flare, comprising:

a housing;

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at least one combustible gas flow passage extending through the housing;

an igniter body made from a heat conducting material disposed in the housing in communication with the at least one combustible gas flow passage; and

a heating element embedded in and totally encapsulated by the body maintaining the body at a temperature above an ignition temperature of a combustible mixture of combustion air and combustible gases, such that the combustible mixture passing along the at least one combustible gas flow passage is ignited immediately upon coming in contact with the igniter body.

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